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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2950
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RUEHTN/AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN 5143
RUEHDU/AMCONSUL DURBAN 9428
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 004180

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/12/2017

TAGS: PGOV PINR KDEM SF

SUBJECT: ANC ELECTION: IDEA OF COMPROMISE STILL ALIVE, BUT
BARELY

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Don Teitelbaum. Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶11. (SBU) Efforts within the ANC to find a "compromise candidate" for ANC president have devolved into finding simply a compromise between Mbeki and Zuma, and not a very obvious one at that. Press reports on 09 December noted that former first lady Winnie Madikizela-Mandela has launched a last-minute bid to broker a truce between the two front-runners by convincing them to remain in their respective positions as ANC President and ANC Deputy President for another five years. Winnie said publicly she is trying to save the party, which is becoming increasingly characterized by behavior that disregards what the ANC stands for: "Sisters are attacking sisters and comrades are at each others' throats."

¶12. (C) Winnie's spokesperson confirmed on 10 December that both Mbeki and Zuma have agreed to meet with her sometime before the conference, albeit separately. Few, however, have confidence that her efforts will bear fruit. UNISA Professor Dirk Kotze told PolOff on 11 December that he had heard Winnie was approached by a handful of senior ANC members who still believe her seniority could influence Mbeki and Zuma. However, Kotze cautions that, "not only is Winnie's proposal unrealistic, it isn't even a compromise." Kotze believes Winnie only accepted the challenge with the hope that it would boost her profile and influence within the ANC.

¶13. (C) COMMENT: Winnie's gamble has paid off. No one, probably not even Winnie, believes that this latest attempt to find a compromise has any chance of succeeding. However, her efforts to "save the party" have received an enormous amount of positive press coverage. She has been nominated for the National Executive Committee by both the Zuma and Mbeki camps and is likely to be rewarded. END COMMENT.
BOST